



Tiqqun

and the Matter of

Bloom in

Contemporary Political
Philosophy

Pedro José
Mariblanca Corrales



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Pedro José Mariblanca Corrales
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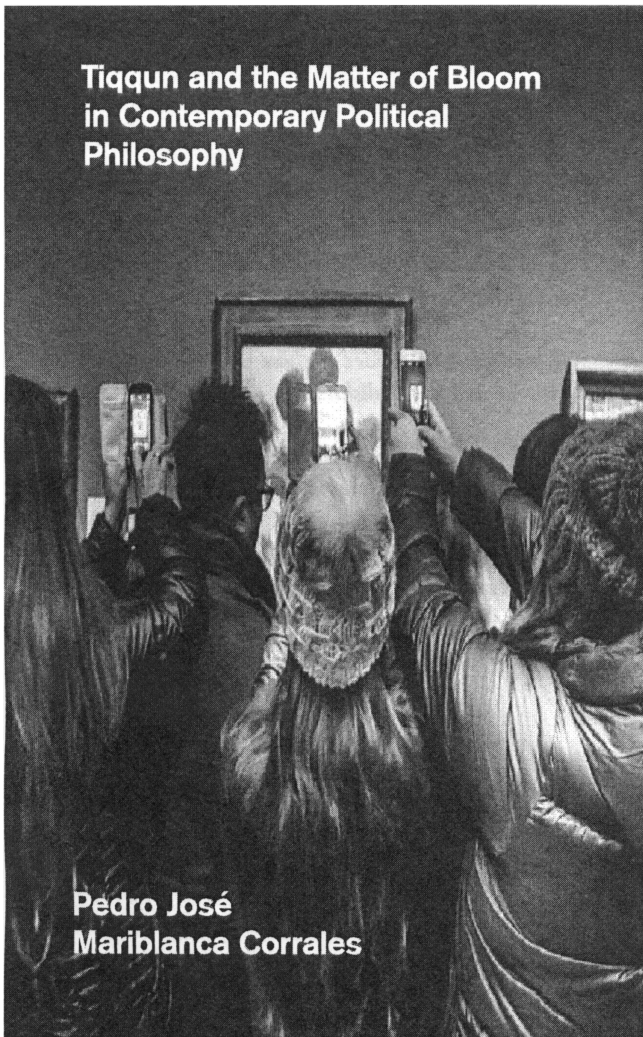
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Philosophy**

**Pedro José
Mariblanca Corrales**



*To all those who have contributed in one way or another
to the writing of this book.*

*To all those who decided to share time
with me and my “bullshit.”*

*To my grassroots and all the territories
where I have learned anything.*

*To the magic of this world that takes care
of us despite our behaviour with it.*

Introduction	1
1 What has given rise to Bloom?	12
1.1 On the economy as a black magic	13
1.2 Dispositifs	19
1.3 The Spectacle	27
1.4 Biopower	35
1.5 The habitat of Bloom: Empire	39
1.5.1 <i>Metropolis</i>	44
1.5.2 <i>Cybernetics</i>	47
1.5.3 <i>The Terrible Community</i>	52
1.6 Insurrections and communes against Empire	58
1.6.1 <i>Insurrections in the civil war</i>	58
1.6.2 <i>Some problems related to insurrections</i>	66
1.6.3 <i>Communization</i>	69
1.6.4 <i>The handicaps of communes</i>	75
2 Eh bien, le Bloom	79
2.1. The Bloom's dark side	79
2.2. The other side of Bloom	85
2.3. Nevertheless...	89

3	Tiqqun	93
3.1	Why should we take Tiqqun into account?	96
3.2	But...	100
3.2.1	<i>The truth and avant-gardism</i>	101
3.2.2	<i>On dystopia and utopia</i>	104
3.2.3	<i>On negation, silence, opacity</i>	106
	Conclusion	108
	Bibliography	114

Introduction

If today, in the age of Bloom, there is in fact a generalized crisis of presence, this is simply due to the ubiquity of the economy in crisis: the WEST'S MODERN HEGEMONIC ECONOMY OF CONSTANT PRESENCE. An economy characterized by the negation of the mere possibility of its crisis through the use of the classical subject—master and measure of all things—as a menace in order to keep things in line. Bloom historically marks the end of the socio-magic effectiveness of this kind of blackmail, of this fairytale. The horizon of human existence once again comprises the crisis of presence, although THEY do not respond to it in the same way as in the traditional world, although THEY do not recognize the crisis as such.

A critical metaphysics could emerge as a science of apparatuses...

Tiqqun

According to Tiquun—a philosophical and activist anonymous collective of France that was born in the late 1990s, disbanded in 2001, gave rise to other groups such as Claire Fontaine, and came back in 2007 under the name of Comité Invisible—the contemporary moment that the populations of the Western World are generally living is a historical moment marked by what seems to be a total crisis in every respect. For Tiquun, the coming together of a series of elements such as post-Fordism (as the best productive/creative economical paradigm), globalization (as the best market for the whole world), social democracy (as the best political mechanism to solve the problems between multiplicities), and the complete interconnection between the Foucauldian biopower and the Debordian Spectacle have given rise to a new context that has empowered the previous one. Tiquun asserts that this context—in which capitalism has been improved by cybernetics—is the context of Empire, and what the Tiquun calls Bloom is its most representative form-of-life.

The current cultural, social, political, and economic situation in the Western world is the

result of a historical transition that has been analyzed by many of the most influential social, critical, and political theorists and schools of thought: thinkers such as Nietzsche, Marx, De Martino, the Frankfurt School, Heidegger, Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari, Negri, Agamben. The work of all of them has been crucial to create a corpus that helps us to understand the reason of our economic, social, political, and cultural present. Tiqqun has intellectual roots in some of the Marxian theories; part of the Frankfurt's School work; Nietzsche's and Heidegger's critiques of metaphysics and Modernity; situationism (with Debord and *the Spectacle* as its best representatives); the structuralist influence of Althusser and Foucault; several of the poststructuralist ideas of Deleuze, Guattari, Agamben, and Negri and Rancière (among other influences). Nevertheless, although these theories remain important to study what the nature of capitalism is, how it works, and its results, most of them belong to a different context, which is similar to but also quite different from this one. For this reason, Tiqqun delves deeply into this theoretical genealogy to develop its own theories about contemporary capitalism in the Western world. The group does this by inserting itself in a

philosophical tradition completely related to what it studies, and offering some ideas to confront the current capitalist logic that is reconfiguring the whole world and what Tiqqun considers as its consequences: crisis of presence, alienation, *pensée unique*, total exploitation of people and Nature, and one-dimensional control.

Nowadays, Tiqqun is rare in the field of post-situationist thought because the group modernises the ideas of the revolutionary Situationist International, a group that defended conscious breaks with the old codes of representation and proposed the experimental search for new forms of politics and cultural production—as we can observe in its critique of political institutions (parties, unions, assemblies) and the concept of the *worker class*—its rejection of ideologies, and the will to construct situations (for instance through the development of insurrections). Moreover, in its theorisation about communes and insurrections (which I will analyze later), Tiqqun goes deeply into the situationist postulates of collectivity, direct action, self-management, and collaboration as important weapons to confront capitalism. Finally, the situationist legacy in Tiqqun is also palpable in the

dystopian, violent, and incendiary style that this group uses to analyze and communicate the current situation of capitalism.

Tiqqun is rooted in more than the Situationists and the theoretical influences I mention above. Tiqqun is related to the space for articulation of discourses, means, and fights left empty by the political and artistic avant-gardes of the 20th century. Italian autonomism from the 70s and the occupy movements in France and Italy are also of great significance for the members of this group, especially in their approach to create practical strategies that work hand-in-hand with theory.

According to the members of Tiqqun and the Invisible Committee, if capitalism has triumphed, “it is not merely because it crushes, exploits, represses, but also because it is desirable.”¹ There are a lot of people who agree with capitalist logic or who do not consider it dangerous. This is so, because of all the elements that capitalism uses to build consensus around itself, because of the inability of capitalism’s enemies (communism and anarchism are the most common) to develop

1 Tiqqun. Lecture at the Anarchist Turn Conference, New School for Social Research, New York City, May 6th, 2011.

legitimate alternatives, and because there has been a considerable paralysis of the counter-attack against capitalism,² paralysis involving polite discourse, denunciations, gloss, and “criticism without effectiveness.”³ This would validate the statement of Thomas Nail when he says that, actually, there is no new theory nor practice of revolution⁴ because the moral, ethical, structural, and hierarchical response to the contradictions of capitalism carried out by the institutions that accept the rules of the current system has become obsolete.

As Agamben says, “there is an opaque zone of indifferentiation in thinking of the left, which is associated to the classical political thinking.”⁵ With incisive, dry, poetic, emotional, intriguing,

2 Anonymous. *Appel*. Available on <http://bloom0101.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ENGcall2.pdf>, p. 5.

3 Tiqqun. “The Little Game of the Man of the Old Regime.” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 188.

4 Nail, Thomas. *Returning to Revolution. Deleuze, Guattari and Zapatismo*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012, p. 1.

5 Agamben, Giorgio. Presentation of the book *Contribution à la guerre en cours* (Paris, La Fabrique editions, 2009). April 19th 2009 in the Lavoisier modern parisienne. Available on http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x929gp_agamben-sur-tiqqun_news

and sometimes funny prose, the reflection of Tiqqun presents new politico-philosophical modulations to radicalise the way that critical theory and activism work. This novelty is represented by terms such as Bloom, Young-Girl, Civil War, Imaginary Party, Terrible Community, Insurrection, and the review of theories on Empire (Negri), Spectacle (Debord), Biopower and Governmentality (Foucault), and Dispositifs (Deleuze). For Tiqqun, Bloom—a central and ambiguous figure borrowed from Joyce's *Ulysses*—is the alienated and dispossessed person of the immobilised civilisation of the Western world, a civilisation that has been subjugated by capitalism in the sense that its population's whole life and relations are completely mediated by forces external to them. However, Tiqqun states that this contemporary condition of “bloomification” is where a radical potential lies to change the direction taken by Western populations. Tiqqun considers that the condition of Bloom represents the political and subjective stasis of most people in the Western world. And the revolutionary figure to overcome the crisis of presence of Bloom is neither the party nor a concrete social class, but the Imaginary Party, which is a multiplicity of

practices, existences, and worlds in disagreement that can remind us of the Ranciérian term of “politics.”⁶ The Imaginary Party is what Tiqqun defends to suspend the force of Empire, Spectacle, Biopower, and their techniques. Insurrections and civil war are the arena where Tiqqun considers that the Imaginary Party has to work to end up with the Terrible Community—represented by the current community—and give rise to a new reality where communes are important.

With respect to other works, the work of Tiqqun brings some novelties and comes into play to review what has already been done. Tiqqun and the Invisible Committee represent an important contribution to rethink the political imaginary. These groups are becoming a significant element for current social and activist movements to develop new theoretical and practical strategies of analysing and confronting the current capitalist logic. We can observe that in insurrectionary events, such as the current Black blocs or some of the biggest American and European protests, as well as in the emergence of new philosophical

6 The meaning that Rancière gives to it is related to the constant conflict between forms-of-life and dissensus rather than consensus.

radical groups, the defence of the communization and the return to the local. Moreover, while the work of Tiqqun is theoretical, its members do not belong to the academic world, which has kept their writings free of the formalism that surrounds Academia and thus much more accessible for those who are not linked to intellectual or militant communities. This matter is relevant because it can be interpreted as the looking for the interconnection between politicised people and people who are not politicised—by destroying the ideological chains and rethinking theory and in the Western world. Tiqqun is constantly present in revolutionary struggles, its anonymity is the anonymity of every being-in-the-world—its members are not leaders who people have to follow—and its life away from the academic world allows it to write and act without the limitations imposed by the state and private companies—which fund Academia.

Nevertheless, although the theory of Tiqqun represents new theoretical constructions and has become popular, I also want to critique the work of this group because using Tiqqun's theory to analyze the present-day Western world implies several problems: self-evident and

confident descriptions of the current situation, lack of objectivity in its analysis, contradictions, ambiguities, repetition of past mistakes, and isolation with respect to other theoretical, practical, and political proposals. Tiqqun presents its theory as a truth which looks like a totalisation in the understanding of domination, struggle, identity, and existence, and it seems that Tiqqun does not take into account that these truths are not immutable. In addition, there is a millenarian and messianic aura surrounding all the work of Tiqqun, which presents its ideas as the framework that we must follow if we want to build up a potential force to face up to capitalism.

By reviewing, criticising, and relating the published work of Tiqqun with other theories, my intention is to, on the one hand, show how its theoretical and practical proposals can contribute to the development of critical theory and, on the other hand, to outline the importance of rethinking revolutionary practice in the current socio-political and philosophical panorama of the Western world.

In the first section of my work, I explain how and why Bloom has appeared and where he is. Theories of several authors previous to Tiqqun

will be important to pave the way for outlining the work of the group and explaining its theoretical constructions. Every element in this section will be critically analyzed.

With the second section, I explain what Tiqqun means, what this group implies, and show some of its theoretical and practical contradictions.

Finally, in my conclusion, I will attempt to open new questions to develop critical theory and the interconnection between theory and practice in our contemporary context.

1 What has given rise to Bloom?

Prisoner of the quotidian existence's triviality, humankind live under the impersonal empire of "how to" (das man): I am forced to work, to live, and even to hold certain points of view because that is how to work, how to live and how to think.

Sein und Zeit,
Martin Heidegger

The theory of Bloom is presented by Tiquun as “an attempt to *historicise* presence, to record, for starters, the current state of our being-in-the-world.”⁷ According to Tiquun, the current state of humankind’s being-in-the-world is determined by a crisis of presence. Although this crisis is not global—because it is a crisis that affects part of the Western world population—its capacity to influence every form-of-life has become important everywhere because of a series of elements that

7 Tiquun. *This is not a program*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011, p. 143.

operate to spread it. For Tiqqun, the most relevant elements that have given rise to this crisis of presence are the Spectacle, biopower, and cybernetics, but I will also analyze the logics of the current capitalism and *dispositifs* (apparatuses) because they are essential to the spread of that crisis as well. All of them connect people to “Empire” without opposition.

Through a critical analysis of how Tiqqun understands the current economy, Spectacle, biopower, apparatuses, and cybernetics, I aim to trace a genealogy of Bloom in order to show what Bloom’s roots are, what determines him, and where he lives.

1.1 On the economy as a black magic

Toyotism, automation, job enrichment, increased flexibility and personalisation of work, delocalisation, decentralisation, outsourcing, just-in-time methods, project-specific management, the closure of large manufacturing plants, the liquidation of heavy industrial systems, worker consolidation—these are but aspects of the reforms of the modes of production with the main purpose of restoring

*capitalist power over production.*⁸

According to Tiqqun, during the period between 1945 and 1989 (Marcuse's era of Advanced Industrial Society) and the following one—in which globalisation is the rule—a social formation emerged, a formation that took over from Fordist capitalism, a kind of society in which “work has totally triumphed over all other ways of existing, at the very moment when workers have become superfluous.”⁹

There has been an important economic transformation that has been possible thanks to delocalisation, mechanisation, automation, digitalisation of production in works that are divided in highly skilled positions of research, conception, control, coordination, and communication. As the Invisible Committee shows, with this change:

The series of tasks that cannot be delegated to automation form a nebulous cluster of jobs that, because they cannot be occupied by machines, are occupied by any human—warehousemen, stock people, assembly line workers, seasonal workers, etc. This flexible, undifferentiated

8 Ibid. p. 103.

9 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 30.

*workforce that moves from one task to the next and never stays long in a business can no longer even consolidate itself as a force, being outside the centre of the production process and employed to plug the holes of what has not yet been mechanized, as if pulverized in a multitude of interstices. [...] This floating population must somehow be kept occupied.*¹⁰

An order of work has been created, where working “is tied less to the *economic* necessity of producing goods than to the *political necessity* of producing producers and consumers.”¹¹ According to Tiqqun, from the late '70s onwards, work has experienced several changes that imply the constant circulation of commodities among every space and the reduction of every relation to production and consumption. Commodities have invaded every space within the current system, which gives rise to the commodification and the reification of everything. The production of use-values as commodities results in their subsumption under exchange-value; abstractly consumed in a context in which necessities are socially mediated

10 Ibid. pp. 32-33.

11 Ibid. p. 32.

to be integrated in the global productive process. The act of consuming becomes a genuine object of consumerism by displacing the consumed object.¹² Currently, the relationship between people and commodities is binding, the commodity fetishism acquires a mood dimension and the exchange-value of objects turns into a natural property of things.

Moreover, since the '70s, the economy has experienced another transcendental change. The energy crisis beginning in 1973—similar to the economic one from 1929 to 1945—taught that the liberal economy was failing in the maintenance of capitalism as the best economic system in the world. Tiqqun argues that this made capitalism start to reorganise itself so as to control each situation. The understanding of the crisis became important for capitalism because the crisis brings uncertainty, and uncertainty can only be contested through anticipation. As Tiqqun says, the invisible hand of Adam Smith—supply, demand, and the laws of classical economy—became inadequate to manage capitalism because capitalism's main source of wealth has changed.

12 Maura, Eduardo. *Las teorías críticas de Walter Benjamin*. Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2013, p. 167.

What Tiqqun observes is that a new model has taken the place of liberalism: the “New Economy.” This new economy is neoliberalism,

*which brings together under the same official nomenclature of cybernetic origin the ensemble of the transformations that the Western nations have undergone in the last thirty years [and] is but an ensemble of new subjugations, a new solution to the practical problem of the social order and its future.*¹³

This new economy aims for the creation of mechanisms that organise the society in order to turn it into an order of market. To achieve it, the new economy also intends to anticipate possible *states of emergency* through a constant gathering of information about everything. That is to say, if, during the period of liberalism, there was a system of information concerning economic activity to serve the needs of regulation, today the self-regulation process is based on the valorisation of information. Today, the main source of wealth of capitalism is overall knowledge.

Through the changes in working methods and the management of information, neoliberalism

13 Ibid. 51.

gets more complete control of everything. Crisis has become an interesting mechanism to analyze and develop new ways of production according to the reaction of people. Crisis is presented by the forces of power as a synonym of chaos, and chaos is often related to terror. Tiqqun says that neoliberalism “is founded on *terror*, which is a factor in its evolution—the evolution of economic growth, moral progress,”¹⁴ and allows people to be constantly mobilised for the worst. Thus, “the state of emergency, which is proper to all crises, is what allows self-regulation to be relaunched, and to maintain itself as a perpetual movement.”¹⁵ The possible *state of emergency* and crisis are what justify the constant growth, which is considered an endless road towards balance.

Milton Friedman wrote: “only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change.”¹⁶ With respect to that idea, Tiqqun—through the Invisible Committee—says: “far from being intimidated by crisis, capital is nowadays working

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 52.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 52.

¹⁶ Friedman, Milton. *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 7.

really hard to produce and experience it.”¹⁷ Not long ago, crisis was something that arose unexpectedly or cyclically. Currently, according to the Invisible Committee, economic crisis is a political method of managing and a political technique of government.

As we can observe, the changes that capitalism has carried out to develop the neoliberal, global economy have been made to present capitalism as the best possibility for auto-regulation and security. Capitalism is presented as the only viable path to achieve a progress that is only enjoyed by those who work for the improvement of capitalism. In this regard, Tiqqun says that a problem has come up: capitalism gives rise to a production of subjectivity and semiotization that tells us how we must respond to this order of things. This subjectification that economy unties is what empowers the presence of Bloom.

1.2 Dispositifs

(It arises) the sense that THEY finally succeeded in producing consciousness, in producing body as

17 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 22.

*waste, as inert and cumbersome mass, the condition, but above all the obstacle, to purely cerebral development processes. The chair, the desk, the computer: an apparatus. A productive enframing. A methodical enterprise of attenuating all forms-of-life.*¹⁸

The matter of *dispositifs* (commonly translated as “apparatuses”) is important in the work of Tiqqun. However, this group defines them in such a poetical way that it is necessary to use ideas on them that have been developed by other authors, such as Foucault, Deleuze, Agamben, and Althusser.

For Tiqqun, an apparatus

*functions as an existential prosthesis which THEY administer to Bloom so that he is able to live within the crisis of presence, albeit unwittingly, and to remain there day after day without succumbing.*¹⁹

Thus, an apparatus is an element that looks to determine every form-of-life in a territory and to take over for those who will submit to those apparatuses for convenience or comfort.

18 Tiqqun. *This is Not a Program*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011, p. 140.

19 Ibid. p. 149.

In the text *What is a dispositif*, by which Deleuze analyzes the theses of Foucault on apparatuses, the philosopher of rhizomes says this about apparatus—

*It is a tangle, a multilinear ensemble. It is composed of lines, each having a different nature. [...] The first two dimensions of a social apparatus [dispositif] are curves of visibility and curves of enunciation. [...] Thirdly, a social apparatus [dispositif] consists of lines of forces [that come] about 'in any relationship between one point and another.' [...] Finally (there are) lines of subjectification.*²⁰

Therefore, an apparatus is visible; establishes statements; implies the encounter of forces that crisscross and mingle through friction, breakages, and fractures, and is a process of individuation that comes to bear on groups and people. Consequently, an apparatus implies not universals but a multiplicity of several changing processes that play an important role in the becoming of humankind.

In 1977, during an interview, Foucault described an apparatus as follows,

20 Deleuze, Gilles. "What is a *Dispositif*?" in Armstrong, Timothy. *Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 1991, p. 159-160.

[It is] *first and foremost, a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid—[whose nature] is essentially strategic, which means that we are speaking about a certain manipulation of relation of forces, of a rational and concrete intervention in the relations of forces, either so as to develop them in a particular direction, or to block them, to stabilize them, and to utilize them. The apparatus is thus always inscribed into a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain limits of knowledge that arise from it and, to an equal degree, condition it.*²¹

Moreover, as Agamben says, apparatuses represent a “division that separates the living being from itself and from its immediate relationship with its environment”²² because they

21 Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Ed. C Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980, p. 194-196.

22 Agamben, Giorgio. *What is an apparatus. And other essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

shape the time, the space, and everything that surround people through diverse elements such as, for example, news, laws, justice, politics, education, family, culture, commodities, parties, unions, nation-states. This idea is strongly reminiscent of Louis Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses. Apparatuses create and spread ideology. However, unlike Althusser's concept, apparatuses are not entirely repressive because they only neutralise and normalise. They establish the bond between statements and the population for which these statements are intended. Thus, the repression does not seem to be repression because people enter into the logic of statements by themselves, consuming freely what the apparatuses provide for them.

As Deleuze says, "we belong to social apparatuses [*dispositifs*] and act within them"²³ because enunciation opens the way for constructions which are constantly present—visible—in our life, elements that provide coordinates important in the organization of singularities (subjectification), and forces that connect us to others through rela-

23 Deleuze, Gilles. "What is a *Dispositif*?" in Armstrong, Timothy. *Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 1991, 164.

tions of power and knowledge.

Turning back to Tiqqun, the group uses a metaphor to present the relationship between apparatuses and people as a mechanism of language. They say,

It is striking to see, year in, year out, how beings increasingly slip between their predicates, between the identities that THEY give them. [...] [There is] need for apparatuses, more and more apparatuses: in order to stabilize the relationship between predicates and "subjects" that stubbornly elude them; to thwart the diffuse creation of complex, asymmetric, perverse relationships with those predicates; to produce information, to produce the real as information.²⁴

However, [they continue] Clearly, the deviations measured by the norm, those according to which THEY individualize-apportion bodies, are no longer enough to maintain order; in addition, terror must be made to reign, terror of straying too far from the norm.²⁵

Here we observe the relationship between economy and apparatuses, both of which need

24 Ibid. p. 161-162.

25 Ibid. p.162.

terror. As economy, apparatuses are black magic because they *possess us*. This is because “the apparatus ensures the integration, the conversion into an *identity* of a heterogeneous collection of discourses, gestures, attitudes: haecceities.”²⁶ For Tiqqun, the productive hysteria provoked by an economic crisis must be accompanied by the *transparential*²⁷ hysteria of visible apparatuses that attempt to connect statements with subjects through lines of force in order to have a normal situation where everything is already determined. Hence, normalization feeds the crisis of presence because the apparatus connects itself with our presence in crisis to manage it rather than to make it easier for us to deal with it. It is the “supplement” that allows a presence in crisis to continue functioning. It does not assume the vacuum of a crisis, the apparatus “fills” it. It seems that apparatuses have raised Western populations as *surviving machines* to make the Bloom’s crisis of presence more bearable.

In a world largely determined by apparatuses,

26 Ibid. p. 192.

27 A word coined by me to draw attention to the total transparency that we are currently subjected to via social media, surveillance, search engine tracking, etc.

Tiqqun equates the Western population with bourgeois subjectivity, which is for this group a subjectivity that

*survives itself indefinitely in the myth of the free, autonomous, strong individual, self-assured and sure of his world, a world that contains in its fenced-in yard a set of values and established experiences that our 'individual' wholly inhabits, as well as the consumption of a certain number of cultural commodities [and apparatuses] that serve him as a system of references.*²⁸

Nevertheless, Tiqqun only analyzes and criticises apparatuses. For them, the struggle against apparatuses is a matter of time, possibility, and *becoming-erased*. This position shows the messianism of Tiqqun, which sets that it is possible to escape from apparatuses because it is possible to learn how not to be determined by them. Should we wait for that possibility even though the constant and strong presence of apparatuses makes difficult the separation from them? The proposition of Tiqqun would fail in the sense that waiting without reflecting or acting can be counter-productive

28 Tiqqun. "The Little Game of the Man of the Old Regime." *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du Parti Imaginaire: Zone d'Opacité Offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 179.

for us. Regarding this matter, I agree with Deleuze's claim: we must run, but, while running, we must pick up weapons. In this regard, as Guattari suggests, the creation of counter-apparatuses here and now is what matters because this direct action implies an important means to reduce the presence of apparatuses among people, who are completely surrounded by them.²⁹

1.3 The Spectacle

*The world-no-longer-world, this squared-off world, lives in pathetic auto-celebration still called "Spectacle." Spectacle nourishes itself in doubt and reduces conscience to anesthetized passivity.*³⁰

According to Tiqqun, one of the most important elements to maintain the crisis of presence represented by the figure of Bloom is the *Spectacle*, which is defined by Guy Debord as "both the

29 Guattari, Félix & Rolnik, Suley. *Micropolítica: Cartografias do desejo*. Petropolis: Editora Vozes Ltda., 2005.

30 Tiqqun. "Theses on the terrible community." *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du Parti Imaginaire—Zone d'Opacité Offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 92-93.

outcome and the goal of the dominant mode of production.”³¹ The Spectacle is what deprives individuals of their own life by turning them into exploited and passive raw material. Bloom bears a strong resemblance to the society of Spectacle.

Spectacle, for Tiqqun, is one of the many poles that sustains the current political, cultural, and economic system in the Western world: Empire. The Spectacle is “a social relation between persons, mediated by images,”³² and the current dominant social relation—the relation between Blooms—is entirely mediated by spectacular autonomous representations, that is to say, by immaterial constructions that determine everything, material or immaterial, related to our life.

Guy Debord wrote that

*the Spectacle cannot be understood as a mere visual excess produced by mass-media technologies. It is a worldview that has actually been materialized, a view of a world that has become objective.*³³

31 Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books, 1994, p. 5.

32 Ibid. p. 1.

33 Ibid. p. 1.

The objectification of the world carried out by the Spectacle is possible thanks to apparatuses, branches connecting people with images that subjectify them—remember the visibility and the lines of force that an apparatus implies.

Like Debord, Tiqqun also considers that the coming of the Spectacle represents the victory of economy—in this case, the neoliberal economy—, whose objective is the development of production. They assert,

*Spectacle presents itself as the realization of commodity metaphysics [...] The commodity here effectively becomes the form in which all manifestations of life appear, the objective form itself both of object and subject.*³⁴

This is in relation with Debord's statement that the Spectacle "is simply economy developing for itself."³⁵

Therefore, the Spectacle creates its own sphere, based on images and founded on capitalist economy. Spectacle is a representation, a material

34 Tiqqun. "Qu'est-ce que la métaphysique critique?" *TIQQUN, organe conscient du parti imaginaire—Exercices de métaphysique critique*. Auto-edition, 1999, p. 15.

35 Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books, 1994, p. 3.

reconstruction of the world by images. It is like a discourse without dialogue because “the Spectacle only recognises as a truly existent opposition the opposition that *is willing to speak*; that is, to speak *its language*.”³⁶ Through the Spectacle, Empire creates a whole set of social, cultural, political, philosophical, psychological, labour, and economic constructions that have an important role in the becoming of people and shape it according to the logic of the *new economy*.

Metaphorically, for Tiqqun, the Spectacle is the black magic which the present order of things uses to maintain its power over people. It is the poison that feeds the crisis of presence by production, commodification, moral standards, and the images that represent them. However, it is also presented as the antidote for that crisis of presence because the Spectacle can provide to people the means and techniques that they need to overcome that crisis. This matter implies a problem: what the Spectacle really does is just to create a vicious circle due to the fact that people who are under the Spectacle do not manage their

36 Tiqqun. “Le silence et son au-delà” *TIQQUN Organe conscient du Parti Imaginaire. Exercices de Métaphysique Critique*. Auto-edition, 1999, p. 73.

own crisis because there is already something which manages the crisis for them. As Debord says:

*From automobiles to television, the goods that the spectacular system chooses to produce also serve it as weapons for constantly reinforcing the conditions that engender 'lonely crowds.'*³⁷

Within the Spectacle, Tiquun asserts,

*people never experience concrete events, but only conventions, rules, and a completely symbolized, completely constructed second nature.*³⁸

The Spectacle is an effective weapon for Empire, as it establishes that there is only one reality, the “reality where we have to live,” reality that opposes other *possibles*. What is at stake here is the rejection of other possible worlds. The loss of experience is the loss of creation, the loss of activity. “Within the Spectacle, activity is nullified”³⁹ because humankind does not make the event happen, but waits for it as spectators.

The Spectacle is a provider of given realities,

37 Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books, 1994, p. 17

38 Tiquun. *Theory of Bloom*. Berkeley: LBCBooks, 2012, p. 49.

39 Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books, 1994, p. 17.

and it has no other ministry than hindering the existence of other possible realities created in an autonomous way separated from the imperial logic. For this reason, like economy and apparatuses, the Spectacle also resorts to terror in order to spread its dynamic. If there are no other possible worlds apart from the reality which the Spectacle provides, any attempt to construct different spheres in the spectacular Western world will be considered dangerous and persecuted. In this case, there is no total anticipation of problems, but a constant surveillance and the spread of an unfounded fear of the unknown. This implies an important matter: “in the Spectacle, power is everywhere”⁴⁰ because there can be no more realities than the constructed reality we perceive.

*You are either fighting for the Spectacle, or for
the Imaginary Party, there is nothing in between.*

What is Critical Metaphysics,
Tiqqun

Tiqqun and the Invisible Committee present themselves as the conscious organ of the Imaginary

40 Tiqqun. *Theory of Bloom*. Berkeley: LBCBooks, 2012, p. 118.

Party, whose partisans, they say, attack all the existing rules of the current system. The Imaginary Party is not like the political parties that we know; it does not aim to take power to change the order of things and bring what its members consider necessary.

*The Imaginary Party only composes itself to this day of the negative multitude of those who do not have a class, and do not want to have one, of the solitary crowd of those who have re-appropriated their fundamental non-appearance in commodity society under the form of a voluntary non-participation in it. At first, the Imaginary Party presents itself simply as the community of defection, the party of exodus, of fleeing reality and paradoxically as subversion without subject.*⁴¹

The Imaginary Party is similar to the Rancièrean politics, as it represents an heterogeneous party where those who have no part are present, because it

is the political party, or more exactly the party of the political, because it is the sole one which

41 Tiqqun. "Theses on the Imaginary Party." *TIQQUN, Organe conscient du parti imaginaire: Exercices de métaphysique critique*. Auto-edition, 1999, p. 57.

*can designate in this society the metaphysical labour of an absolute hostility, that is to say the inner existence of a veritable rupture.*⁴²

The Imaginary Party would have no consensus among its “militants” because it is a party that does not advocate for the construction of a collective with capitals under which people can be identified. The Imaginary Party represents the Deleuzian and Guattarian multiplicity rather than the multitude of Hardt and Negri because it is not a whole, but the encounter of multiple forms-of-life without identities and equivalence between them.

People in the Imaginary Party only have a premise: the destruction of the present order. For this reason, Tiqqun says that the Imaginary Party is known in the Spectacle as the party of chaos, crisis, and disaster due to the fact that it threatens to break the normalcy of the world of visibility.

The operational articulation of the Imaginary Party is autonomous. It is not founded on a vertical system, but a horizontal one, made of beings who want to move the *outside* inside. Actually, there is no outside but only margins, because Empire includes everything under its domination.

42 Ibid. p. 55.

The Imaginary Party is the spectre currently haunting the Western world because it gives rise to the formation of a becoming that defends the civil war and the insurrection as a paradigm of inhabiting the world.

Nevertheless, nowadays, the Spectacle is clearly insufficient as an approximation to reality. We live in a period where reality exposes itself in its total visibility. There is a loss of the real, but reality has not been completely erased. The homonym of the real means that the real is hindering, revealing, disengaging, simulating itself, and that each of these images of the real is every moment the real itself.

1.4 Biopower

Biopower is a concept created by Foucault that refers to the disciplinary society, which is determined by the interests in exercising power over life and human productivity through the increased regulation of population by governments and their demographic apparatuses of surveillance, security, analysis, and management. Biopower is a type of power that tries to take control of human life and is proposed as an “internal war” against the dangers created inside the social body. Biopower is

inherent to capitalism and to its development; it is a new paradigm of power.

The definition of biopower given by Hardt and Negri can be very helpful:

*Biopower is a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it, and rearticulating it. Power can achieve an effective command over the entire life of the population only when it becomes an integral, vital function that every individual embraces and reactivates of his or her own accord. [...] The highest function of this power is to invest life through and through, and its primary task is to administer life. Biopower thus refers to a situation in which what is directly at stake in power is the production and reproduction of life itself.*⁴³

Tiqqun defines biopower in a different way. They show how biopower is what perfects the work of neoliberal economy, apparatuses, and the Spectacle within Empire. Delving into the Foucauldian ideas on biopower, Tiqqun shows us an important concern related to this element:

Biopower is a form of power that no longer rises

43 Hardt, Michael and Negri, Toni. *Empire*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000, p. 24.

*up over against “civil society” as a sovereign hypostasis, as a Great Exterior Subject. It can no longer be isolated from society. Biopower means only that power adheres to life and life to power. Thus, from the perspective of its classical form, power is changing radically before our eyes, from a solid to a gaseous, molecular state. To coin a formula: Biopower is the SUBLIMATION of power.*⁴⁴

This definition shows how biopower is what allows power to be everywhere; how it is more diffuse and difficult to pin down than sovereign power, which usually acts by visible forces. Nothing escapes from biopower because it is what connects people to the current order of things, i.e., neoliberal capitalism in the Western world. Moreover, due to the fact that biopower is what regulates populations—through the anticipation of possible problems and invisible apparatuses—everything and everyone is easily under the control of power because the strength of its human absorption and its force relations make domination easy. Biopower aims not only to govern human-

44 Tiqqun. “Introduction to Civil War”. *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 22.

kind and things directly, but also *possibilities* and *conditions* of possibility. For this reason, according to Tiqqun, biopower turns people into Bloom, because it holds their power to construct other possible worlds.

Biopower works based on the spread of several ideas, values, moral codes, news, which are ever-present in our day-to-day lives, that people internalise, to determine all of people's acts, behaviours, and ways of thinking and living. Apparatuses facilitate the presence of biopower around us, because they can materialize it, through commodities, spaces, forces, sciences, politicians, and the work that has been arranged as the best provider of livelihoods. Biopower is what allows for experimentation with the economy, because it can take control of every reaction through surveillance. It, connected with the Spectacle, is what maintains the unique sphere that the neoliberal forces have created for the people living under their regime. To sum up, biopower is the hypostasis of the imperial power because it is "surveillance without watchmen," it is what determines life's organization, what spreads the thought that threatens to become the only one possible.

There is a problem with the description of biopower given by Tiqqun, Hardt, and Negri; they think of biopower as a sovereign authority. Their definition of biopower is more focused on its macro dimension than its micro one. However, their proposals to overcome biopower are quite different. Hardt and Negri defend the interconnection and the interrelationship of multitudes under the umbrella of an institution to confront biopower—what leads us to the Party. Tiqqun considers that a “minor politics” is better.

1.5 The habitat of Bloom: Empire

Tiqqun develops its theories separately, which complicates the construction of a corpus that connects every idea from this group. For this reason, I will discuss the habitat of Bloom in order to present Tiqqun's main concept. The approach to the habitat of Bloom is the approach to the Western world and the political, social, cultural, and economic direction that it has taken from the last decade of the 20th century. This direction has led the Western world to the current reality of Empire.

The decisive historical concept of this continuity was that of a restrainer: katechon. “Empire” in this sense meant the historical power to restrain

*the appearance of the Antichrist and the end of the present eon.*⁴⁵

Tiqqun uses the term Empire to explain the current situation of global capitalism and what is the element that manages it. According to these authors, Empire is

*the new political subject that rules the worldwide exchanges, the sovereign power that rules the world [...] [It] is the empire of collective capital.*⁴⁶

Empire does not mean imperialism, it is the confirmation of Modernity's decline. It is a new political paradigm based on inclusion rather than on exclusion. The exclusionary dialectic of the past has been replaced by an inclusion that recognises without negations, without binary divisions. What is at stake here is that there is no outside within Empire, there is only differential inclusion.⁴⁷ Empire is a cartography without borders, which has mapped the world to command it and its populations according to the interests of global neoliberalism.

45 Schmitt, Carl. *The Nomos of the Earth*. New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2006, p. 60.

46 Albiac, Gabriel. (2001, July 21). Encuentros digitales. Available on: <http://www.elmundo.es/encuentros/invitados/2001/07/67/>

47 Hardt, Michael and Negri, Antonio. *Empire*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2001, p. 194.

For Hardt and Negri, Empire is a supranational entity that “is emerging today as the centre that supports the globalization of productive networks.”⁴⁸ The Empire described by Tiqqun is an invisible element that “manages and digests, absorbs, and reintegrates all that lives.”⁴⁹ This statement indicates that Empire makes use of biopower because both of them have the same mission: control of life. If, for Hardt and Negri, Empire is the result of a political, judicial, and economic genealogy that emerges in Modernity and reaches its high point in the 21st century, Tiqqun goes beyond by claiming that Spectacle and apparatuses also have a considerable influence in the Empire’s becoming. Tiqqun emphasizes with other words the point made by Hardt and Negri, which is that Empire works to develop and maintain an epochal suspension, a normal situation in which there is no conflict despite crises.

Tiqqun recognises the economic and political relevance of Empire. Nevertheless, for its members, the social impact of Empire—which they

48 Ibid. p. 20.

49 Tiqqun. “Comment faire” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: La Fabrique éditions, 2001, p. 286.

think has not been widely analyzed—is the most important due to the fact that “THE POLITICAL NOW DOMINATES THE ECONOMIC [and] what is ultimately at stake is no longer the extraction of surplus value, but *Control*.”⁵⁰ Hobbes defended the Leviathan as the best means to avoid war amongst populations. Empire works in a similar way; for it, civil war is a risk to be managed. Nevertheless, it does not really require governments to achieve that management because it has a wealth network that constitutes a social real where everything/one is connected and disconnected at the same time. Everything is connected because there are several codes organizing every sphere under the same structure—its structure. Everything is disconnected because Empire carries out the disempowerment of people’s autonomy by destroying every bond between populations and by spreading the imperial monopoly of knowledge-power.

The crisis is important for Empire. Empire works by means of a constant crisis—which can be economic, political, or of presence—or the possibility of a crisis. Ordinary people have

50 Tiqqun. “A Critical Metaphysics Could Emerge as a Science of Apparatuses...”, *This is Not a Program*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011, p. 155.

nothing to do in the management of a real or virtual crisis. The becoming-manager-of-the-crisis is dangerous for Empire. For this reason, Empire spreads its imperial Spectacle of images, its apparatuses, and its economic products; it needs a permanent order of things that it must manage. This is what leads Tiqqun to claim that

*Empire exists 'positively' only in crisis, only as negation and reaction. If we too belong to Empire, it is only because it is impossible to get outside it.*⁵¹

Following the theses of Deleuze and Guattari on space, we could assert that every sphere in the Western world has been territorialized by the logic of neoliberalism, which is represented by Empire. Like power, Empire is everywhere. That is why this territorialization is not only spatial, but also ontological, psychological, metaphysical, political, linguistic, of knowledge; it is a territorialization of every domain. If we use the terminology of Marx and some of the concepts of Tiqqun, Empire would be the habitat of Bloom's superstructure and metropolis, cybernetics, and the ter-

51 Tiqqun. "Introduction to Civil War," *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d'opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 22.

rible community would form its base because:

- Metropolis is the visible space where Empire becomes materialized,
- Cybernetics is the network through which Empire and its apparatuses operate and spread the lines of force of Spectacle and biopower,
- Terrible Community is the community that dominates the other communities within Empire.

1.5.1 Metropolis

Metropolis is the new paradigm of spatial habitability in the Western world. It is not the only kind of habitat, but it has imposed itself upon the other spatial models. Metropolis represents a new territory based on the total organization of everything under its influence. As Santiago López-Petit claims, metropolis is the result of productive decentralization and has come into play to replace the characteristic factory-society of the 20th century.⁵² For Tiqqun, every territory is synthesized within the metropolis through a whole set of networks, such as apparatuses, commodities, biopower, police.

52 López-Petit, Santiago. *Entre el ser y el poder*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2009.

Big urban cities are the most common representation of the metropolis. Nevertheless, nothing escapes from metropolitan power because the metropolis strongly influences both urban and rural territories. That is to say, metropolis represents the development of territory where urban and rural dimensions are united by a rationalizing organization. Moreover, nowadays, the easy interconnection and the proximity between spaces have developed the integration of every territory under the metropolitan parameters and the spread of its nature.

Metropolis is the Empire's materialization, it is the décor of the Spectacle, it is the place where apparatuses work. It is within the metropolis that imperial and neoliberal capitalist logic works best because the metropolitan urbanism allows a better location of every space and of the people who inhabit them. The metropolis has a place for leisure, a place for shopping, a residential place, a place to walk around, a place for politics, a financial place. Metropolis allows power to be everywhere through its infrastructures.

The existence of heterogeneities within the metropolis is difficult because it is like a totality that has no outsides. If there is any heterogeneity, it must be managed by Empire, which provides

people with a mix of ambiances indefinitely recombined, the purposes of which are control, the expansion of production, and the circulation of commodities. In a world where progress is measured in economic terms, the metropolis is presented as the objective that must be achieved by every place because it is composed of everything that global capitalism presents as the best, as the most beautiful, as the most necessary.

Through metropolis, the panopticon model, analyzed by Foucault to explain how power controls every sphere, is replaced by a new dimension in which everyone observes—whether they want to or not, it is enough to be present—whether the rules are respected, because everything is transparent and there is a collective internalization of power extended to all of society through the moral and political codes of capitalism provided and imposed by the Spectacle, biopower, and apparatuses. Thus, the contemporary metropolis of the Western world is the major point of concentration for the techniques of capitalism.

Metropolitan society moves itself on a plane: open, expansive, and smooth space where the difference is the most important aspect. What is at stake here is the individualization that metropolis

defends. Although there is no place for heterogeneities within the metropolitan homogeneity, although metropolis represents a total integration of beings-in-the-world under the same configuration, although

*there is almost nothing left to reappropriate in this societal reality, [...] everything is done so the human only relates to himself, only creates himself separately from other forms of existence, uses or rubs shoulders with them without ever encountering them.*⁵³

The individualizing strategy of metropolis will be important to decentralize, decompose, and deconstruct every social bond.

1.5.2 Cybernetics

*Critical minds hardly appear to be very inclined to take into account the emergence of cybernetics as a new technology of government, which federates and associates both discipline and biopolitics, police and advertising, its ancestors in the exercise of domination, all too ineffective today.*⁵⁴

53 Anonymous. *Appel*. Available on <http://bloom0101.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ENGcall2.pdf>, p. 31.

54 Tiqqun. "Cybernetic Hypothesis" *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d'opacité offensive*. Paris: Les

The economic crises, productive changes, political and social struggles, the war, and all the technological advances that performed the arrival and the consolidation of globalisation during the 20th century demonstrated that new mechanisms of order and organization at every scale were necessary. Cybernetics is one of the most important of these mechanisms.

For Tiqqun, cybernetics is the last improvement of neoliberalism, it includes Modernity and the liberalist logic at the same time as it transcends them. Cybernetics represents the quasi-perfect union of the cultural industry of Adorno and Horkheimer, the Marcusean advanced industrial society, the society of Spectacle studied by Debord, the disciplinary society analyzed by Foucault, and the society of control described by Deleuze. Cybernetics is like a programme based on organization, transparency, intelligence, and control to anticipate every crisis that breaks the stability within Empire. Cybernetics is what empowers the circulation of apparatuses that act in the metropolis and spread the reality and the life created by the Spectacle and biopower. It is the key figure allowing

Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 42.

the vertical, static, and centralized sovereign paradigm of power to be horizontal, dynamic, and distributed at the same time.

Edward Bernays wrote in 1928,

*The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government that is the true ruling power of our country.*⁵⁵

This sentence glimpses some of the most important matters related to cybernetics: information, circulation of ideas and behaviours, transparency, administration, governmentality, freedom.

For the cybernetic logic of the current cultural, juridical, economic, and socio-political system, like for Karl Deutsch, power is the capacity to make things happen, and governing is the equivalent to a rational coordination of the information and decisions circulating through the social body. The dominant way of governing in the Western world is the cybernetic one. This coordination of information, this circulation, is also production because cybernetics works to

55 Bernays, Edward. *Propaganda*. New York: Horace Liveright, 1928, p. 9.

maximise the volume of commodity flows by minimising obstacles.

Transparency is important for cybernetics. To attain it, cybernetics spreads horizontalism, participation, and decentralisation in order to connect everyone. Thus, there is more dynamism than static states, more control, more ideas circulating to predict the future and to reproduce the present.

The repressive logic of cybernetics is hidden behind an important element about which I have said nothing until now: democracy. Democracy is what cybernetics conceives as an effective political means of order and anticipation. Democracy is what manages the Hobbesian civil war, the *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of all against all), through the pacification of possible conflicts and the spread of the metropolitan logic. Under a reign of freedom totally set by economy, apparatuses, biopower, Spectacle—Empire—democracy seems, as Tiqqun claims, “the imposition of a unanimity that is at the same time unequally shared and violently enclosed within a collectivity that is supposed to make freedom possible.”⁵⁶ Democracy,

56 Tiqqun. “Theses on the Terrible Community.” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 90.

as we can observe, always gives rise to a form of government, a way of leading the behaviour of a population, a multiplicity that needs care. The democratic government takes into account and shapes the desires, ways of doing and thinking, customs, fears, dispositions, and means of the people it supposedly represents. The cybernetic logic in the Western world connects commodities, technology, biopower, the Spectacle, apparatuses, information, metropolis, and allows Empire to suspend everything through its imperial network of nodes and to govern everything under the democratic mask of nation-states that are determined by neoliberal capitalism.

According to Tiqqun, cybernetics has become a science of society tending “to invent a kind of social regulation that would leave behind the macro-institutions of State and Market, preferring to work through micro-mechanisms of control.”⁵⁷

By cybernetics, Tiqqun is referring to the appearance of a novel mechanism of producing humanity, the mechanism that assimilates the

57 Tiqqun. “Cybernetic Hypothesis” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 49.

totality of phenomena and makes subjects up through its order and its certainty. For this reason, Tiqqun asserts that “the laboratory the cybernetic hypothesis carries out its experiments in has been called ‘contemporary society.’”⁵⁸

1.5.3 The terrible community

The terrible community is the only form of community compatible with this world, with Bloom.

Theses on the Terrible Community,
Tiqqun

But, what exactly is a terrible community? Why does Tiqqun talk about a terrible community? What are its characteristics?

Tiqqun’s discussion of the role of terrible communities within Empire refers to permanent institutions—political parties, unions, assemblies, political organizations, social movements—that try to confront Empire but fail due to the weakness of their attack. Those who want to be completely outside of Empire without confronting it are also members of a terrible community. Thus, the activist

58 Ibid. p. 48.

community that desires the improvement of the existing order of things through the conquest of institutions and the bureaucratization of democracy, or the activist community that projects itself outside the sphere of capitalism in order to destroy it are terrible communities. However, there are more kinds of terrible communities than the ones Tiqqun explicitly notes.

If a terrible community is one that “is dominated and becomes a factor of cohesion and affirmation”⁵⁹ for Tiqqun, then the terrible community is the community governed by the cybernetic imperial regime that operates through an apparently democratic game in which people participate and assume all that is introduced by the neoliberal market, biopower, and the apparatuses. The terrible community is also the metropolis’ community, the community inhabiting and consuming the reality created by the Spectacle. Moreover, the terrible community is the community where the heterogeneity of multiplicities has become a homogeneity by means of a differential inclusion.

59 Tiqqun. “Ma noi ci seramo” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 274.

In Tiqqun's critique of the terrible communities it identifies, one of the most distinctive characteristics is statism. However, statism can also be identified as a characteristic of people who do not belong to the terrible communities described by Tiqqun because the imperial power that is everywhere makes people under Empire believe that there is no other possible alternative to the current socio-political-cultural-economic situation in the Western world. There are other terrible communities different from the terrible communities analyzed by Tiqqun, but that also have "no future or becoming, nor any ends truly outside of itself, nor any desire to become other than what it is."⁶⁰

The community that has accepted appearances as real elements is a terrible community. The community that considers the world of Spectacle to be the only possible world is a terrible community because biopower impedes within it all other different worlds and apparatuses that could help to overcome the internal problems in that community.

60 Tiqqun. "Theses on the Terrible Community", *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d'opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 88.

Although Tiqqun does not allude to the Frankfurt School in its description of the terrible community, we can assert that these communities are characterised by the one-dimensionality described by Marcuse. That is to say, like what Marcuse called the advanced industrial society, the terrible community is determined by “a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behaviour in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe.”⁶¹ The same as the Marcusean one-dimensionality, the single dimension of the terrible community is ruled not only by materialism, but by a set of visible and invisible elements such as commodities, technology, language, mass media, institutions, parties, unions, bureaucracy, laws, information, culture, social structures, and hierarchies. Like in the one-dimensional society, individuals in terrible communities “can identify themselves with the existence that is imposed upon them and have in it their own devel-

61 Marcuse, Herbert. *One-Dimensional Man*. Boston: Beacon, 1964, p. 20.

opment and satisfaction,”⁶² under the maintenance of a democratic regime of apparent freedom. This matter is related to the the sentence in which Tiqqun establishes that “choosing the individual pseudo-freedom granted by biopolitical democracies—whether by necessity, on a gamble, or from a thirst for pleasure—is equivalent, for someone who is part of a terrible community, to *a real* ethical degradation, since the freedom of biopolitical democracies is never anything but the freedom to buy and to sell oneself.”⁶³

There is no autonomy within the terrible community because everyone is under the influence of several regimes of police: the forces of law and order, the police of commodities and apparatuses surrounding us, the police of biopower (managing the way that people can receive and internalize information), the police of the reality established by the Spectacle as the only one, the police of the metropolis where Empire spreads its logic. There must be no conflict within the terrible community, and if there were one, then it should

62 Ibid. p. 19.

63 Tiqqun. “Theses on the Terrible Community”, *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 90.

be managed by Empire, “where ordinary litigation and foundational politics are erased to the advantage of [its] managerial vision of life and living.”⁶⁴ Autonomy in the terrible community is considered a danger, because it can give rise to what French philosopher Rancière calls *dissensus*, that is, the force against *consensus*. Following Rancière’s ideas, *consensus* “is a certain regime of the perceptible: the regime in which the parties are presupposed as already given, their community established; [it presupposes] the disappearance of any gap between a party to a dispute and a part of society.”⁶⁵ *Consensus* would be what Empire has established as a unique reality. And *dissensus* is the force of resistance towards the existing order,

*an organization of the sensible where there is neither concealed behind appearances nor a single regime of presentation and interpretation of the given imposing its obviousness on all.*⁶⁶

Tiqqun claims that “democracy is the cell

64 Ibid. p. 90.

65 Rancière, Jacques. *Disagreement*. Minneapolis: University Minnesota, 2004, p. 102.

66 Rancière, Jacques. *The Emancipated Spectator*. London: Verso, 2011, p. 49.

culture medium of all terrible communities”⁶⁷ because it is what impedes the friction between beings-in-the-world and the forms-of-life in them.

1.6 Insurrections and communes against Empire

1.6.1 Insurrections in the civil war

*Whoever does not take sides in a civil war is
truck with infamy and loses all right to politics.*

The Constitution of Athens
Solon

There is a civil war within Empire, a war that is, according to Foucault, “the matrix of all the power struggles, of all the power strategies and, consequently, the matrix of all the struggles over and against power.” He says,

*civil war not only brings collective elements into
play, but it constitutes them. Far from being the
process through which one comes down again*

67 Tiqqun. “Theses on the Terrible Community”, *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p. 90.

*from the republic to individuality, from the sovereign to the state of nature, from the collective order to the war of all against all, civil war is the process through and by which a certain number of new collectives that had not seen the light of day constitute themselves.*⁶⁸

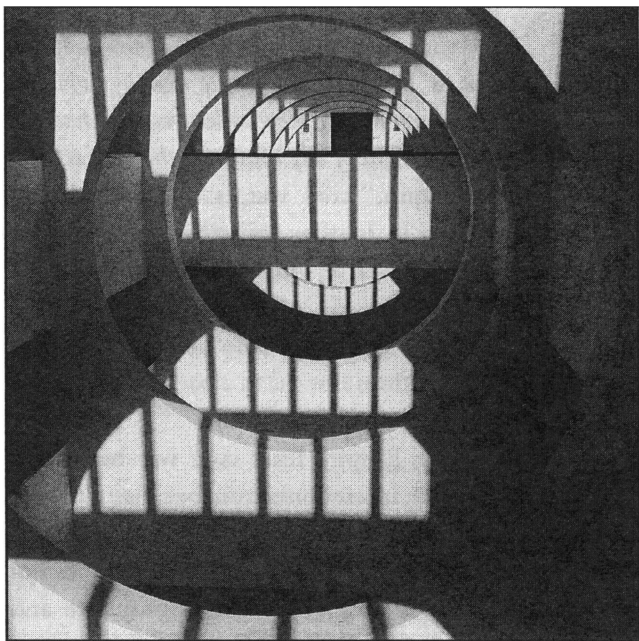
For Tiqqun, “civil war is the free play of forms-of-life; it is the principle of their co-existence.”⁶⁹ What is at stake is the concern of the Common, the concern of friction, confrontation or sharing amongst the people of a place. In this sense, civil war does not mean a bad thing, it is the logic of our day-to-day.

However, Empire fears civil war because it implies contact, interconnection, because it “is the opposite of normal conditions, it lies in a zone of undecidability.”⁷⁰ For this reason, Empire does not act against civil war, it looks to appropriate and manage it, as well as to put an end to it by means of all its weapons: neoliberal economy, apparatuses,

68 Quoted in Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 150.

69 Tiqqun. *Introduction to Civil War*. London: Semiotext(e), 2010, p. 32.

70 Agamben, Giorgio. *The State of Exception*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, p. 3.



Estrella de la Fuente Fernández, *The hole*

the Spectacle, biopower, cybernetics, and metropolis. In its *war* against civil war, Empire spreads the Bloom subjectivity, which is the subjectivity of “the citizen,” who is individually—without thinking that he is part of a community—involved in the democratic life of nation-states through an imposed consensus rather than one that is agreed-upon.

It is about a declaration of war on the Humankind.
To Our Friends,
Comité Invisible

The insurrection is one of the main elements that Tiqqun takes into account to confront Empire. The insurrection is the logic of those who have decided to wait no longer. Dismissing the power of Empire is what Tiqqun proposes when it talks about insurrections. To achieve that, it is necessary to confront Empire on the streets, to dismantle its apparatuses, to destroy its spectacular metropolis, to become anonymous to the cybernetics surveillance, and to deprive Empire of its foundation.

For Tiqqun, “the insurrections have come, finally.” We have the example of what has

happened in the Western world since 2008. Syntagma and what it unleashed in Greece from 2008 on, the Arab Spring, the Indignados Movement in Spain, Occupy in several countries, Quebec in 2012, the Turkish Taksim in 2013, Italy and the strength of some of its uprisings, the new Black Blocs (which have to change their strategy but which also have the capacity to mobilise a lot of people around the world), Ukraine, Kurdistan. All of them are insurrections. Tiqqun hardly takes into account as an insurrectionary movement the Zapatistas' work in Mexico from the 90s, the Argentinean autonomism at the beginning of the 21st century, the struggles in Chile or Iceland, or the growing resistance against racist policies in the US.

What is an insurrection? First of all, it is the human strike that tries to make people aware of the repression, coercion, and lack of freedom under Empire; it is the war against the Bloom humankind that prevails in the Western world. An insurrection is the coming together of different people who might know each other or not—the latter being most common—and act to defunctionalize all the imperial logic of late capitalism, the capitalism of crisis.

The Invisible Committee says that “we can no longer even see how an insurrection might begin”⁷¹ because it is spontaneous and invisible and does not follow the past strategies and tactics of the revolution, and it is not outlined by a political institution because it is decentralized. The insurrection is like the Rancièrian *politics*. It is what arises when the order of domination is interrupted by those who have no part, those who reclaim a place and put into question the way of organizing the social. To use the words of Rancière, the insurrection “refers to rare moments that challenge or overturn the current configuration of police order,”⁷² which is managed by the imperial branches. Likewise, an insurrection “cannot be defined on the basis of any pre-existing subject”⁷³ because it represents the becoming of subjects through direct action, initiatives, creation outside of the imposed normality. Therefore, an

71 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 63.

72 Woodford, Clare. Book Review: *The Lessons of Rancière* by Chambers, S. *Political Theory*. Sage Publications, Inc: 2014, 42 Vol, p. 371.

73 Rancière, Jacques. “Ten Theses on Politics,” *Theory and Event*. Vol. 5, No. 3, 2001, p. 8.

insurrection is a rupture rather than a social movement; it is the production of existence rather than the reproduction of what we already know. As Guattari or Deleuze would say, this interruption is carried out in a molecular way through the rhizomatic interconnection between multiplicities, between the different forms-of-life in the civil war.

An insurrection is an attack on the current order of things in the Western world through different activities, which can be violent or peaceful. Regarding violence, Tiqqun talks sensibly about it. For its members,

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PEACEFUL INSURRECTION. Weapons are necessary: it is a question of doing everything possible to make using them unnecessary. An insurrection is more about taking up arms and maintaining an "armed presence" than it is about armed struggle. We need to distinguish clearly between being armed and the use of arms. [...]

An authentic pacifism cannot mean refusing weapons, but only refusing to use them. Pacifism without being able to fire a shot is nothing but the theoretical formulation of impotence. [...]
[However], the militarization of civil war is

*the defeat of insurrection.*⁷⁴

Struggling against Empire is becoming-armed. Nevertheless, while there are some insurrectionists who defend the use of weapons, we do not need to use weapons as such. The weapons come from the assemblage of theoretical and practical knowledges between people, the creation of collectives that do not make use of the traditional socio-political organization—which is normally based on a unique and hierarchical programme (i.e. one that only they can provide, and in which one must submit to their managers in order to participate)—and act in a micropolitical way rather than under the parameters of the macropolitical structure of the representative democracy, the work done anonymously to confront the system, the silence that does not respond to the yearning for noise of the imperial Spectacle, which poisons people, the movements that make power visible are insurrections.

The organization of an insurrection departs from the situation, which is not organized because it organizes itself. The organization of an insurrec-

74 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p 84-85.

tion cannot be carried out without a dense net of relations between peoples and forms-of-life. This organization is not codified through formal agreements. Becoming is the key figure in the organization of an insurrection because it implies creation rather than re-creation, production rather than reproduction. The encounter gives rise to the assemblage. There are contact, friction, and affection during the assemblage. Becoming is what heterogeneous multiplicities do when they cooperate in an autonomous and rhizomatic way. An insurrection is the deterritorialization of something that has been territorialized by Empire and becomes reterritorialized. However, deterritorialization and reterritorialization are not established; they arise when the nodes of a network, previously unknown to each other, work hand-in-hand.

1.6.2 Some problems related to insurrections

“The insurrections have come, finally,” and they have been everywhere. However, all of them have been defeated. Tiqqun does not see this as a problem; its members believe that what is most important is that insurgents have irrupted and have shown their force. But the stability that Tiqqun claims has been broken remains alive. What is more,

this stability has been reinforced, despite the reality of a “new politics,” because the financial crisis that began in 2008 is managed by the same politicians and the same organisms. The insurrections have come, but their force has declined. The insurrections have been institutionalized in some countries (Syriza, Podemos); the Arab springs have been kidnapped by the Islamists and the reformist army; the anti-racist struggles in the US are strongly repressed and have little media coverage; in the Ukraine a kind of Post-Cold War has intensified the old imperialist strategies and the dominant neoliberal system remains stable. The defenders of neoliberalism are united, but this is not the case with their enemies—commonly known as the left—who are witnesses to a populist drift without huge proposals that invades all the activist spaces. There is an *intermezzo*, an impasse to make revolution possible, suffering an important softening that threatens paralysis. A new analysis of the situation is necessary and, most important, the creation of new theoretical and practical frameworks has to overcome the reproduction of past strategies and ideas.

The way that Tiqqun defends the insurrections (without thinking of them as within a revo-

lution) does not, as it seems to me, take into account the way that the revolution and insurrections are deeply connected. Moreover, Tiqqun establishes that no one knows how an insurrection might begin. If we follow their ideas, there is nothing to tell us what an insurrection is, where it goes, or how it becomes. It seems that the insurrection has no objectives, no purposes, and Tiqqun presents it like an alternative figure to revolution, its precursor. These are important concerns, points that can have so many people backing out of the fight: people who, for example, do not believe in the anarchist premise of acting only for the present, not the future. Tiqqun rejects organization, but its members promote being prepared. There is no need for a plan that has to be achieved in the future, but the tension of the present fight requires a *how* and a *to*—which at least implies an organization.

Having said that, here is a new question: how can the insurrection drive to a permanent revolution?

1.6.3 Communization

The commune is the basic unit of partisan reality. An insurrectional surge may be nothing more than a multiplication of communes, their coming

into contact and forming of ties.

The Coming Insurrection,

Comité Invisible

The communism that Tiqqun proposes is quite different from that defended by Marx and all his followers and detractors, including the post-Marxists. This communism is libertarian communism, anarchist communism. The communization proposed by Tiqqun rejects the organization of the revolution for the future; it does not conceive revolution as a process, as an objective that comes after a transition of struggles. Tiqqun does not see communization as taking or changing power, since historically that has meant that the takers and changers of power become the new rulers. The perspective of this communization is based on a revolution rooted in the transformation of everyday life. Communization does not rely on a unique programme, it would be composed of multiple lines of flight confronting Empire as a rhizomatic war machine where everyone is transversally and horizontally connected by different collective and shared ways of acting. Communization is becoming-together. Tiqqun defends this thesis by saying that:

*COMMUNES COME INTO BEING when
people find each other, get on with each other,*

*and decide on a common path. [...] It is the joy of an encounter that survives its expected end. [...] A commune forms every time a few people, freed of their individual straitjackets, decide to rely only on themselves and measure their strength against reality.*⁷⁵

*Therefore, the commune is the agreement to confront together the world. [...] Declaring the Commune means allowing to be linked.*⁷⁶

A commune is a rupture in the order that currently dominates the West. A commune is a territory of beings-in-common that is normally outside of the imperial metropolis. However, there are all kinds of communes.

*Every wildcat strike is a commune; every building occupied collectively and on a clear basis is a commune, the action committees of 1968 were communes, as were the slave maroons in the United States, or Radio Alice in Bologna in 1977.*⁷⁷

75 Ibid. p. 68.

76 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 202.

77 Comité Invisible. *The coming insurrection*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 68.

For this reason, there can be communes both within and outside areas where Empire is strong. All of them have the same aim: overtaking the metropolis and its spectacular logic based on the maintenance of capitalism through a growing economy, apparatuses, biopower, cybernetics, terrible communities.

*The commune can only grow from its outside as an organism that only lives by interiorising what surrounds it. The commune can only be nourished by what is different from it precisely because it wants to grow.*⁷⁸

A commune represents a deterritorialized place that has been reterritorialized and aims to deterritorialize the rest of territories that have been territorialized by Empire. All the necessities that Empire creates for people are confronted by communes because

the commune responds to necessities with the purpose of annihilating the being of necessity in us. Its elemental gesture is to supply itself the means to make an experience of scarcity—wherever it is—disappear as soon as it

78 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 205.

*can appear.*⁷⁹

To achieve it, the communes need to grow and spread, that is to say, deterritorialize and reterritorialize spaces that have escaped from the control of people. The commune's geography is ramified and rhizomatic. There are different roles within them, but they have no hierarchies—because people change their roles regularly. There are a lot of decisions in a commune, but they are not unilateral. As a deterritorialized space, the commune does not follow the existent parameters fixed by Empire. It has no institutions, but working groups. By reterritorializing the space, the commune becomes visible and present within the system and shapes its own becoming.

One of the most important aims for a commune is autonomism. And this objective is achieved outside the welfare state provided by Empire. The commune has to consider how to continually increase the level and scope of its self-organization.⁸⁰ This self-organization requires a change in the conception of time, one not based

79 Ibid. 216.

80 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 70.

on the traditional and logically ordered succession of everyday things. Tiqqun wants the time of the commune to elude work, at least as we know it today; that is to say, the work that produces and reproduces the neoliberal capitalist logic that puts a value on everything. This thesis comes to confirm what *Endnotes* authors say: that communization “is the overcoming of the alienated social relation of production which constitutes the separation of subjectivity and objectivity experienced in capitalism [and that] in the overcoming of the separation of individuals from each other and from the means of production, communization overcomes the separation of human subjectivity from objectified labour.”⁸¹ Thus, work is not measured according to capitalist parameters, which are only based on value. Without reproducing the normal modes of working under capitalism, there can be a release of time, which is what the commune aims for due to the fact that its exigency is to free up the most time for the most people, according to Tiqqun. Thus,

81 *Endnotes* “Communization and Value-Form Theory,” available on <http://endnotes.org.uk/en/endnotes-communization-and-value-form-theory>.

*Vacant time, dead time, the time of emptiness and the fear of emptiness—this is the time of work. There will be no more time to fill, but a liberation of energy that no “time” contains; lines that take shape, that accentuate each other, that we can follow at our leisure, to their ends, until we see them cross with others.*⁸²

[And] escaping this fate calls for a long and consistent process of apprenticeship and for multiple, massive experiments. It is a question of knowing how to fight, to pick locks, to set broken bones and treat sicknesses; how to build a pirate radio transmitter; how to set up street kitchens; how to aim straight; how to gather together scattered knowledge and set up wartime agronomics; understand plankton biology; soil composition; study the way plants interact; get to know possible uses for and connections with our immediate environment as well as the limits we cannot go beyond without exhausting it. We must start today, in preparation for the days when we will need more than just a symbolic

82 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 69.

*portion of our nourishment and care.*⁸³

The handicaps of communes

Tiqqun aims for communization, but there are some important concerns related to the communes: how can they work apart from a desert that is everywhere? What kind of people, and how many, does a commune need? The defenders of communization usually establish that the communes do not need many people. On the one hand, this position is good because it implies a deep organization in which everyone knows everything and can strongly participate in it. On the other hand, it gives rise to two important problems: isolation and minoritarian politics. Isolation and minoritarianism can centralize the commune and make difficult the interconnection among all the communes that exist because the communes can have a lot of differences between them. Attempts to reach an agreement between communes would be endless. The communization that Tiqqun claims is one between friends, friends who must develop a process of slowing down, disconnecting, and increasing opacity in order to become unrep-

83 Ibid. p. 71.

resented and ungovernable. I do not mean that small communes are bad, nor that what the struggle against Empire needs is the centralized organization of a big party of majorities but, in the words of the Institute for Experimental Freedom, one thousand people is far better than one to two hundred. The communes should be small but not as small as they are these days. The communes need invisibility and opacity, but they also need to be present in the world that surrounds them. The communes need distance, but not to be outside (because there is no outside). The more people, the more ideas; the more ideas, the more knowledge; the more diversity of people, the more bonds with others. We have the cases of Gamonal or Can Vies in Burgos and Barcelona (Spain), where the confluence between communal insurrectionary groups and ordinary people reinforced the struggles against the neoliberal policies that were taking place in both areas. At the end of *À nos amis*, the Invisible Committee sets that “writing is a vanity, unless it is for the friend. Including the friend one does not know yet.”⁸⁴ I think whoever is inserted in the war against Empire should think in the

84 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 241.

same way in relation to every action. However, Tiqqun barely acknowledges that the construction and the improvement of a revolutionary movement requires better contact with other people, contact that should have a common language in order to share ideas with different people who do not know each other, who do not possess the same resources and knowledge, people without whom nothing will be possible. This differs from the ideas of Tiqqun, which defends a politicized life in a world where politicization is not the main concern—due to the fact that politics has been appropriated by a small part of population. Also, many people do not tend to think politically because they are strongly exposed to the force of Empire and its weapons (work, apparatuses...)

Even if we accept the communization proposed by Tiqqun, will it be enough in a world that is almost globalized? Can these communes compete with the metropolis? The development of communes is interesting, but I think that revolution needs something more to change the current situation because communes mean a more primitive life, which is normally seen as an economic necessity rather than desirable, with the use of a set of skills to survive in a small town or

the countryside. Perhaps communes are the solution, but they should look for the interaction with the metropolis—which is one of the most important arteries of capitalism—because the times have changed and we must try to take advantage of both worlds without succumbing to their failings. The local is good, but connecting the local in a universal or international way requires a deep reflection in order to deterritorialize and reterritorialize spaces. Moreover, there must be a point of confluence between invisibility—to struggle—and visibility—to untie encounters and assemblages.

Another issue arises: the communizing strategy of Tiqqun is closely linked to a failed historic one: European autonomist struggles. Why would Tiqqun's communes triumph now when they were defeated forty years ago?

2 Eh bien, le Bloom

Bloom is the concept that Tiqqun uses to describe what its members consider the most characteristic contemporary condition of people in the Western

world. Bloom is about the crisis of presence, the crisis of Modern society under late capitalism, people who represent a certain existential weakness, people in a situation of powerlessness and indifference faced with the static world of the end of History. Bloom is described as everyone who is trapped in the current quasi-artificial reality, in the “normality.” However, Bloom is not only a negative figure for us to avoid; it is poison and antidote at the same time. It is the bottom where momentum can be regained. Let us now analyze who is Bloom.

2.1 The Bloom's dark side

First, the negative conception of this term: As I have been saying, Tiqqun posits that there is a crisis of presence, a crisis represented by a form-of-life that is controlled by Empire, a form-of-life that objectifies people by providing them a kind of “subjectivization” only through several powers such as cybernetics, commodities, apparatuses. This form-of-life that Tiqqun establishes as the most visible in the Western world has emptied people and makes them cover their resulting vacuum and their absence with a never-ending agitation as a spectator, tourist, voter, consumer.

What does the crisis of presence mean? What is the relationship between the crisis of presence and Bloom? The matter of this crisis refers to the fact that the presence of our being-in-the-world suffers from several problems. It is an *ecstatic* experience that takes people outside of themselves by integrating them inside the field of heterogeneous relations managed by Empire, which tries to control everything related to the presence. People find themselves in a situation where everything becomes fixed and mediated by apparatuses, commodities, the Spectacle, metropolis, biopower, cybernetics, which make people consume rather than create. As De Martino says, in a crisis of presence, people are autistic, isolated, monadic, and anti-historic.⁸⁵ But not everything is bad in a crisis of presence if we reflect on it, as I address below.

For Tiqqun, Bloom is the current historical modality of the crisis of presence. Bloom is the result of the radical expropriation of knowledge, complicities, and collective spaces in a society totally ruled by exterior forces. Bloom is the result of a long process of alienation determined by changes in production—a production entirely

85 De Martino, Ernesto. *The World of Magic*. Washington: Pyramid Communications, 1972.

based on growth (at any price)—in the way in which people work, the technologization of everything, the interconnection between economy and politics, and the spread of the capitalist logic by means of the imperial tools throughout the 20th and the 21st centuries. Therefore, Bloom is the result of all the operations carried out by exploitation, the culture industry, the industrial advanced society's one-dimensionality, commodification, discipline, control, surveillance, the Spectacle, apparatuses, nation-states, globalization. To sum up: Empire.

Like Marx, Tiqqun considers that human subjects are alienated and isolated under capitalist conditions. However, Tiqqun does not reduce all human relationships to commodity relationships; it goes beyond this by affirming that labour is not the only mechanism that alienates people. People are not alienated just because they have no connection to the things they produce or consume. Consumption and production are not only matters of acquisition of physical property, there are also consumptions and productions of identities and images in this new phase of capitalism. That is to say, consumption and production are elements of alienation.

Reviewing part of the work of Debord and Foucault, Tiqqun claims that Bloom is the result of the nexus between Spectacle and biopower because Bloom is like a spectator consuming the images and the gestures of someone who represents them to him and he is surrounded by a great net of apparatuses that establish the way that Bloom must live to be free and secure. Due to the fact that Bloom only produces for the system and consumes what the system provides him, he is like a spectator.

“Those for whom all the relations of self to others are entirely mediated”⁸⁶ are Bloom. Those who are deprived of experience and privacy within the transparent Spectacle and cannot confront the biopolitical publicity of apparatuses, those who have been placed in a space they cannot inhabit because they have lost the sense of community due to the commodity absorption, those whose life is determined by power or market relations to fill their vacuum, those who are *existential tourists*, all of them are Bloom.

Bloom is the Empire’s “citizen,” the ordinary

86 Tiqqun. “The Problem of the Head” *TIQQUN, Organe de liaison au sein du parti imaginaire—Zone d’opacité offensive*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001, p 125.

humankind, the *whatever*-singularity, a subject-non-subject, a “black hole” who has surrendered himself to the life he has had to live. He represents people who have been emptied of all substantial determination, people who have lost control of their own situation. His life becomes determined by external forces, because he has no will, because he is a consumer of other creations that have already been made. He is like an absolute image that is subject to constant reformulation. Bloom is a non-defined-being because he is the bearer of a lot of definitions that have constructed his subjectivity, definitions which have emptied and subjectified him, making him a body. The Bloom’s identity is determined by categories that construct it through an oversaturation of meaning.

Bloom is alone, but his solitude is commonly shared because his condition is the predominant condition in the Western world. He is as if he were not, he lives as if he does not live. He conceives the world as if he does not find himself in some point of space and time because everything that surrounds him does not belong to him because it becomes already constructed. His position to the world is hostile, a position of absolute distance and total strangeness. His way of thinking, his likes, his

needs, the materiality and the immateriality around him are determined by exterior forces. Regarding this matter, Tiquun asserts that

*Bloom appears inseparably as product and cause of the liquidation of all substantial ethos [...]. He is thus himself the man without substantiality, the man who became really abstract, so as to have been effectively cut off from every milieu, dispossessed of all membership and then cast into wandering.*⁸⁷

Bloom is son of the Long Night, which is full of obscurity and whose justification resides in the democratic freedom of individuals who are losing the contact between themselves.

“I’ve got my own style”

“Because I’m worth it”

“Don’t get all worked up”

I DON’T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT BEING FREE, AS
LONG AS I’M HAPPY

2.2 The other side of Bloom

As I said before, not everything in a crisis of pres-

⁸⁷ Tiquun. *Théorie du Bloom*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2000, p. 49.

ence is bad. Why? The crisis of presence shows that we are within an *événement* (in Foucauldian terms), that is to say, a crucial historical moment marked by the break between two *epistemes*—two frameworks of knowledge imposed by power to set what the truth is. *Événements* open possibilities for change. According to Amador Fernández-Savater, there is a really influential order in the becoming of our life, one based on the sovereignty of the absolute. The crisis of presence, the *événement*, opens a tear in this metaphysical order that can give rise to another experience in the world. The crisis of presence breaks the sovereignty, the absolute order of things that we have known. The crisis of presence implies exposition, being-in-situation, interweavement, *common presence*. When something breaks the order, it can also put us inside the field of heterogeneous relations that this world actually is. Bloom and the crisis of presence can be the prelude of a displacement.

*Haunted out from all proper place, [Bloom] has himself become a place. Banished from the world, he makes himself the world.*⁸⁸

88 Ibid. p. 90.

The vacuum that surrounds and feeds Bloom makes him the best minister of the Nothing. However, this vacuum also allows him to be a free spirit. To answer how and why this is the case, Walter Benjamin's theory on the *Barbarian* can be clarifying. Like in the *barbarian* in the passage, the total poverty of Bloom gives rise to the fact that

*He sees nothing permanent. But, for this very reason, he sees ways everywhere. Where others encounter walls or mountains, there, too, he sees a way. Because he sees a way everywhere, he has to clear things from it everywhere... Because he sees ways everywhere, he always positions himself at crossroads. No moment can know what the next will bring. What exists he reduces to rubble, not for the sake of the rubble, but for that of the way leading through it.*⁸⁹

The ostracism to which Bloom has been condemned is key to the creation because he begins from nothing. His absence is his force to create. These conditions are important because they turn Bloom into a troublesome guest.

89 Benjamin, Walter. "Erfahrung und Armut," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Tiedemann, Rolf and Schweppenhausen, Herman. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 213-19; quotation p. 215 and "The Destructive Character," in *Reflections*, ed. Demetz, Peter. New York: Schocken, 1978. p. 302-303.

*Faced with this unknown enemy—in the sense that we can speak of an Unknown Soldier, that is, a soldier that everyone knows to be unknown, singularized as an ‘anybody,’ who has no name, no face, no epic history of his own, who resembles nothing, but is present under his camouflage everywhere in the order of possibilities—domination’s disquiet becomes more and more clearly paranoid.*⁹⁰

Bloom is alienated, he has been reduced to observe and to consume, he is a ghost wandering around the Western world. Yes. But here is his importance for us, because he is a crucial element to what is happening and to the aspirations of capitalist globalization. Bloom is an *individual* who has lost his individuality, his being-in-the-world, but “it is exactly in the extent to which *he is not* an individual that Bloom establishes relations with his peers.”⁹¹

If there is anything in Bloom that thwarts domination, it is the fact that even dispossessed of everything, even in all his nudity, man still

90 Tiqqun. *Théorie du Bloom*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2000, p. 114.

91 Ibid. p. 105.

*has an uncontrollable metaphysical power of repudiation: the power to kill others and to kill himself.*⁹²

Altogether, the contradictions of Bloom show how the biopolitical democratic *consensus*—determined by commodities, apparatuses, and the Spectacle of capitalist Empire—has been established to hide the reality of a total *dissensus*, as I explained before, which is marked by what Rancière calls *disagreement*, that is to say, a situation by which those who have no part take part in their political reality with no impediment for co-existence or social constructions. The contradictory Bloom is the voice of a lament, the lament of those potencies depowered. Bloom shows that the twilight of this current society is near because it is unsustainable. Through self awareness, Bloom arises as the enemy of the Spectacle because the Spectacle glimpses the inside of this social organization depriving Bloom of all Being. Moreover, he admits consequently the imperative of community as his own, the need for releasing a common space from imperial domination.

Bloom is someone who must be overcome.

92 Ibid. p. 123.

He is a *nothing* that must annihilate itself. He knows his essence as that which is outside of him, as that which is brought into play, as that which spoils his integrity. He knows that he is exposed, he knows that there is nothing outside of his being-exposed, he knows that he is different from that being-exposed. He keeps the possibility of not being in all that he is. Due to the fact that he is far away from (or under) any sociological, ideological, or national inscription, he can be affected by any other Bloom. That opens to him the possibility of re-appropriating of non-belonging and of recreating the common outside of the traditional forms.

2.3 Nevertheless...

For Tiqqun, Bloom is the predominant form-of-life in the West. How can we accept this statement if each person is unique? How can we accept that there is a predominant profile when the world is composed of multiplicities that have their own idiosyncrasies? Tiqqun does not make exceptions when talking of Bloom because its members want to show that the Bloom one-dimensionality is everywhere. However, exceptions are unavoidable because what Tiqqun analyzes is only a small part

of the world, one represented by some of the countries of the West: France, England, Germany, Greece, the US, and some others that embrace the Western economic, cultural, political, and social logic. Moreover, Bloom is characteristic of a concrete kind of person represented by the white and patriarchal middle class that occupies a visible and relevant position in that world. It is true that Bloom is gaining ground over other forms-of-life—we can observe this in the way that other cultures are adopting all that “is the normal” in the Western world thanks to the work of globalization. But are there not possibilities of a blend between a bloomified form-of-life and others? We can question whether Bloom is *the* way of life that prevails in the Western world or whether it is one among many.

The ambiguity of Bloom—a figure that is bad and good at the same time—also implies some problems in understanding what Tiquun means by this concept. Bloom must be overcome because he represents the worst characteristics that people can achieve as beings-in-the-world. However, how can these beings-in-the-world join the strategy of Tiquun if they are rejected as the worst people who have emerged after a long process of

imperial work? Where is the point in which Bloom people connect themselves with non-Bloom people if Tiqqun denies that where the desert grows, salvation grows as well? The constant flight outwards proposed by Tiqqun seems to mean abandoning those people who are necessary to confront capitalism, people who would increase and reinforce the current divided fight. The question arises: how would the Empire's citizen transition to the Imaginary Party's agent?



María del Carmen Muela Amorrich

El mundo es nuestro

3 Tikkun

*On the one hand, we want to live communism,
on the other hand, to spread anarchism.*

Comité Invisible

Far from being random, *Tikkun* is a word that carries deep meaning. Metaphorically, it makes reference to the end of the Great Dream, the end of an era that has been presented as the best one, when the truth is that it seems exactly the opposite. This word is the French transcription of the original religious Hebrew term *Tikkun olam*, which indicates a process of redemption, the restoration of the unity of sense and life, and the reparation of everything through human action. The word comes from the Kabbalah, which was mainly created during the Middle Ages. One of the first rabbis from the Tannaim generation, Rabbi Yehuda, was the first to use this word to talk about the reparation made by the Romans in Judea during the 2nd century (through the construction of many buildings and the pacification in the region). When Rabbi Yehuda talked about *Tikkun*, he wanted to grasp the meaning of making changes in a place to make it better, to make it inhabitable.

The bible has humankind born in the Garden of Eden, then sinning, then being exiled, and now to redeem itself from its sins, it must attempt reparation. There was a radical and nihilist Jewish trend during the 17th and the 18th centuries developed by the *Lourianiste* doctrine through the work of Shabtaï Tsvi (1626-1676) and Jacob Frank (1726-1791).⁹³ For them, *Tikkun* means the retreat, the rupture, and the creation of a new reality. Following the theory of Caboret and Garrone, we can affirm that, as the revolution implies the historical end of an evil's process and the victory against its potency, *Tiqqun*—as humankind's redemption—represents a break, but this break is achieved through responsibility and direct action. The sense of *Tiqqun* is what makes every act and every behaviour a move in a meaningful direction, in an immanent sense through the collective position of people from below. What is at stake is the fact of “making world” in a way quite different from the actions of the imperial neoliberalism of the Western world.

There is a messianic influence related to the concern of reparation because this reparation

93 Caboret, D. and Garrone, P., *Avant-garde & Mission. La Tiquounnerie*. Paris: Les amis de LHOOQ, 2002.

becomes possible in the future. In the work of Tiqqun, this messianism is represented by what its members claim: an active and positive process marked by deviation against the Empire's authority, which turns people into responsible subjects of the development of the world. Although "*Tiqqun* is not an assignable point in the future [...], but rather the 'real movement that abolishes the existing state of things,'"⁹⁴ Tiqqun is thinking in the future because they are talking about a becoming in the world. They have used a term that also means "here is the bird's flight."

Tiqqun qua Tiqqun disappeared in 2001. But its members have not stopped working or developing their ideas, as we can see in the writings of *Claire Fontaine* (a group that includes an old member of Tiqqun), the presence of the texts from Tiqqun in recent journals such as "Politics is not a Banana," or the the work of the Invisible Committee—*The coming insurrection* (2007) and *To our friends* (2014)—which are bestsellers among radical and activist groups and philosophers.

94 Tiqqun. *Théorie du Bloom*. Paris: La Fabrique éditions, 2000, p. 104.

3.1 Why should we take Tiqqun into account?

[...] We have seen the dull monologue of Marxism-Leninism regurgitate from still juvenile mouths.

We have seen the purest anarchism negate also what it cannot comprehend.

We have seen the most tedious economism—that of Le Monde Diplomatique—becoming the new popular religion and Negriism imposing itself as the only alternative to the intellectual rout of the global left.

*Leftist militancy has everywhere gone back to raising its tottering constructions, its depressive networks, until exhaustion.*⁹⁵

Tiqqun asserts that the struggle against Empire in the Western world has been completely changed for some time now. The fall of the Berlin wall dealt a hard blow to Marxist communism, unveiled social democracy's real direction—which has increasingly tended to adopt the logic of neo-liberalism—and showed that anarchism had to

95 Anonymous. *Appel*. Available on <http://bloom0101.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ENGcall2.pdf>. p. 6

avoid its predilection for old tactics. From 1990, the revolution has become more bureaucratized, more professional, more controlled by experts, more liquid. Neoliberalism has globalized almost every space; the spectacular Empire's biopolitical democracy is presented as the only possibility for struggle against this new phase of capitalism, the capitalism of crisis.

Those who said, "there are no nihilists, there is only impotence" were not mistaken.

According to López-Petit, the Western world remains within the "Long Night." Despite the fact that there has been an important growth in the struggle against Empire from 2001 to present—as we can observe in movements such as the alter-globalization movements, the new Black Blocs, the insurrectional uprising in Europe, the Arab Springs—the current system of the Western world remains strong because of the maintenance of classical politics; the opposition to the neoliberal system that is localized, simple, and irregular; the extreme separation between those who theorize capitalism and its overcoming and those who put the theory into practice; the belief that neoliberalism can be defeated by playing by its rules and taking its institutions.

As Simon Critchley claims, the Western world lives in a period of disappointment, exhaustion, boredom, incredulity, and passive nihilism because it seems that there is no escape from this order of things.⁹⁶ Day by day, people go to the same places, do the same activities, and abandon their own initiative, embracing instead what others provide them. From a political point of view, there has appeared a total block. The current main function of politics is to depoliticize by hiding behind illusions and small hopes the fact that Western populations are in a time of impasse, a suspension of History. We do not know how to escape from capitalism, and, for this reason, there is a “new politics” that offers itself as the solution by reformulating the old politics rather than changing them. The new politics works on the populist construction of a “we,” the construction of a hegemonic social majority created by a sub-

96 Critchley, Simon. “Critical Theory Today” in *Radical Thinkers: Judith Butler, Simon Critchley, and Jacques Rancière on the importance of critical theory to social movements today*, Workshop with Judith Butler, Jacques Rancière, and Simon Critchley. New York: New School University, Philosophy Department, in collaboration with Verso Books. October 23, 2009. Audio available on <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/simon-critchley/videos/critical-theory-today/>

altern group presenting itself as different when the truth is that it is similar to what already exists. This new politics considers that another world is possible, but only in the future and only if people follow its so-called novel ideas. This so-called new politics agrees to play by the old rules in order, they say, to change current political ways in the West. Nevertheless, for Tiqqun,

*governing is a quite specific way of exercising power. [Governing] is not to impose a discipline on a body, it is not to compel respect for the Law in a territory [...] It is managing the behaviours of a population, a multiplicity that one must watch over like a shepherd does his flock, in order to maximise its potential and guide its freedom.*⁹⁷

Regarding the academic and activist spheres, there is no connection between both of these worlds. Critical theory does not approach social movements, and vice versa. The Academy is barely present in society, it intervenes in culture in an avant-garde way, and is quite separated from activist groups. Intellectual people, who have a huge impact in the construction of policies and the development of knowledge, are however

97 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 66-67.

almost outside of the commitment to make a better world because, as the Spanish historian Josep Fontana says, they seem to have decided to

*close the Academia windows to isolate themselves from the wind that blows in the streets and have opted to survive in a stronghold full of books, by writing mainly to their own tribe and turning into virtue the fact of ignoring a world that, in compensation, ignores them increasingly.*⁹⁸

Tiqqun criticizes the current historical, political, social, cultural, economic, and activist situation. Moreover, as we have seen, this group proposes a new theoretical revision of the current system (Empire) and calls for alternatives in the struggle against the direction the Western world has taken. In these ways Tiqqun brings up many important ideas and challenges.

3.2 But...

How can we adapt the theory and practice proposed by Tiqqun to the current reality and its activist movements? How can we confront the

98 Fontana, Josep. "Actualidad de Pierre Vilar, actualidad del marxismo", in Cohen, Aarón, Congost, Rosa y Luna, Pablo (coords.), *Pierre Vilar: una historia total, una historia en construcción*. Granada: Universidad de Granada y Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2006, p. 19.

permanent institutions represented by nation-states, terrible communities, parties, unions? To what extent are the minoritarian proposals of Tiqqun feasible? How can we connect what Tiqqun defends with wide grassroots movements? Does there have to be government? With a society-non-society totally destroyed, will people believe in these new prophets?

3.2.1 The truth and avant-gardism

*This world requires truth, not consolation. [...] In a world built upon lies, lying cannot be vanquished by its contrary, but only by a world of truth.*⁹⁹

*The opposite of democracy is not dictatorship, it is truth, [and insurrections] depart from ethical truths rather than from political ideologies.*¹⁰⁰

BANANAS ARE PROLETARIANS, like us. They are slaves at the mercy of the economy, they never get to achieve their full potential, they are stripped of their communities and culture. [...]

99 Tiqqun. "Eh bien, la guerre!" *TIQQUN, Organe conscient du parti imaginaire: Exercices de métaphysique critique*. Auto-edition, 1999, p. 4.

100 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La fabrique editions, 2014, p. 64.

and now, reduced to a precarious monoculture, they are in danger of being wiped out by the next pandemic.

SOME LUGUBRIOUS PARTY COMMUNIST is reading this right now and shaking his head: "Bananas cannot be proletarian!" He knows they are not because if they were, he would already be hanging in a tree in a yellow suit, talking them through the finer points of dialectical materialism. [...]

*For the communist, revolution means appropriating politics along with factories and banana plantations.*¹⁰¹

The last quote has nothing to do with Tiqqun. However, it is interesting to think of it in relations to Tiqqun and what they propose. Like that "lugubrious party communist," Tiqqun tries to talk to bananas. because Tiqqun communicates through resonance rather than through arguments that present its ideas as a truth: the unique truth that people have to follow in order to confront Empire. This concern is problematic because Tiqqun is demagogic in the sense that its members create a dialectic based on the famous "with

101 Institute for Experimental Freedom. *Politics is not a Banana*
1. Auto-edition, 2008, p. 5.

me or against me.” Whatever is outside of the theoretical and practical parameters of Tiqqun is considered a mistake, an inoperative proposal, something invalid. Despite the fact that Tiqqun is really interesting because of its violent poetry and its convincing analysis of the current situation in the Western world, the work of Tiqqun is also characterized by the ambiguity, ambivalence, and lack of definition in some of its concepts and proposals. One of many examples is their maxim, “strategic intelligence comes from the heart.”¹⁰²

Tiqqun is against avant-gardes. However, its members present themselves as one because they propose totalizing theories and practices that provide no place for critiques because “they are the best way” to understand what Empire is, how to confront it, and which elements to use in order not to become Bloom. Tiqqun seems to know everything, the rest would be valuation and opposition. They want to spread their ideas. This implies, I think, that Tiqqun fetishizes what they defend because they provide solutions for who is Bloom, solutions for who they think is a problem. People fetishize the proposals of Tiqqun because

102 Comité Invisible. *À nos amis*. Paris: La Fabrique éditions, 2014, p. 16.

they are presented as gestures to awake passive people, because the theory and the practice of Tiqqun are “exemplary.” This implies an indoctrinating position, a position that separates itself from other struggles in the same war, a position that reinforces the imperial strategy based on the sentence *divide et impera*.

3.2.2 On dystopia and utopia

*We are not ready to bet that where the desert grows also grows a salvation. Nothing can happen that does not begin with a secession from everything that makes this desert grow.*¹⁰³

Although Tiqqun is not defeatist, all its work is impregnated with a great sense of negativity, a sense of no way out. The position of Tiqqun is dystopian. Nobody and nothing in the Western world can end the destruction because everyone and everything in this world represents “the means of its own destruction.”¹⁰⁴ Therefore, if the desert is everywhere, what can we do? The dystopia presented by Tiqqun opens the possibility for a

103 Anonymous. *Appel*. Available on <http://bloom0101.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ENGcall2.pdf>, p. 33.

104 Comité Invisible. *The Coming Insurrection*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, p. 40.

future utopia, the utopia of redemption, the utopia that is represented by the meaning of *tikkun*—reparation. There is no hope for the present, but the objective and subjective conditions to achieve the *Tikkun* are possible in the future.

When Tiqqun says, *tout a faille, vive le communisme* [capitalism is declining, it is attending an inevitable destruction] there is a great enthusiasm. Tiqqun's genealogy of Empire aims to show this decadence by affirming that capitalism has no alternative after the current crisis and, therefore, crisis is the last weapon that can reinforce the current order of things. How many times has capitalism been in trouble? Tiqqun determines that the utopia will come if we develop the insurrection and the commune, if we retake the civil war seized by capitalism. This is quite close to the thesis of the First Communist International, which proposed that a big conflict would defeat capitalism forever. For the communists this conflict was a world war. For Tiqqun, it is an insurrectional movement. However, "waiting only teaches waiting." It is true that there have been some changes (as there have been in the past), but are they enough? It seems that the members of Tiqqun do not reflect on what can happen during

the development and the establishment of what they defend. It seems that Tiqqun does not take into account the fact that, as Badiou says, the political history of emancipation is a discontinuous history that does not always exist because the politics of emancipation is not contained in any constant or lineal progress.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, as Rancière asks in his criticism of Tiqqun, why create a utopia with those who one considers stupid?¹⁰⁶ What is at stake here is the plane of immanence, in a time which has been already given and is also always to be constructed.

4.2.3 On negation, silence, opacity

Negation is important for Tiqqun. However, negation only creates movement. Negation is opposition and opposition is not enough. The insurrection is interesting as a negation: it implies a rupture, but the rupture needs something else, it needs to

105 Fernández-Savater, Amador. (2007, March 3). *Problemas de la política de emancipación. Entrevista con el filósofo Alain Badiou*. Available on: <http://www.rebelion.org/noticia.php?id=49027>

106 Fernández-Savater, Amador. (2013, February 16) *Hacer algo "contra" no construye un comunismo positivo. Entrevista al filósofo francés Jacques Rancière*. Available on: http://www.eldiario.es/interferencias/Jacques_Ranciere-organizacion_6_101549853.html

create its own temporality. This temporality can be that of the communes, but if the communes represent the *outside* that moves inside, how can these dialectical “realities” be interconnected? Tiqqun defends desertion, but deserting means fleeing. Thus, there is no interrelation between the outside and the inside.

Becoming-silence and becoming-opacity are important for Tiqqun because they imply less presence in a world totally controlled by Empire. If this world and its societies have become a *world-no-longer-world* and *absent communities*, we need to find how to live together rather than separating ourselves from the rest of people, how to create singularities without identities that take part in heterogeneities, how to be invisible and visible at the same time. There must be distance, but we have to depart without entirely leaving.

Conclusion

Regardless of whether or not we agree with Tiqqun, there is something we cannot evade: its dramatic entrance into the circles of academic, political, activist, and social struggles has been remarkable. What is more, Tiqqun emerged in a time of blockage in politico-philosophical knowledge—although it is true that there has been movement around populism in the left, and that the defenders of the current system do not stop working toward its development.

Tiqqun's work is full of ambiguities, and its members know very well how to play with them to generate and empower our existence in the on-going war. The group makes only passing reference to many philosophical and political points, but clearly know these topics in depth. Tiqqun's analysis and its re-conceptualization of other philosophical and political works has served to re-open debate about matters that have been assumed to be closed. Tiqqun's mocking tone, sometimes vulgar, has separated them from some theoretical spheres, but it has also gotten them in touch with a lot of groups that attend more to practice. They depart from Situationism and go to

messianic positions, but their work leaves no one indifferent: socialists, communists, anarchists, conservatives, neoliberals, urban tribes...

The 21st century started with great changes in the world's becoming. The geopolitical tension in the world is growing. Once again, capitalism has survived a crisis and has become stronger by appropriating it. Social struggle has been regenerated, but has taken a path that scattered it again. The world becomes liquid. It is up to us to revert the situation. What can we do? We must break with patience and the eternal wait and take stock of the current theoretical and practical situation in a critical way in order to develop new imaginaries. Empire must be confronted, but we should reflect on how, where, why, and redefine the historical unrest beyond what we already know.

Tiqqun is not right in everything. It is not a prophet to follow. It is like a weapon, with good and bad points. There is a weapon for each situation in this ongoing war. Sometimes a weapon is not necessary, and sometimes you need a bazooka. The more options you have, the better your attack can be. Far from isolating themselves, as most activist people do, people against Empire should open themselves to what is in the same

front in one way or another, regardless of whether they agree or not with all its ideas.

If there is something that characterizes current times, where the word *creativity* has invaded every sphere, it is the lack of creation. Marxism has its post-Marxism; liberalism has been followed by neoliberalism; communism was kidnapped during the Long Night of bosses, patriarchs, and priests; anarchism—as the name to recognize what anarchists mean—is involved in an intense debate; and social democracy succumbed to the charms of a capitalism that is always adapting.

By being aware of the speed at which capitalism works and the mistakes that were made in the past, people would be able to work for the present, which is more important than anything else. And this work for the present requires destruction because the destruction of everything is what we need to set the foundations of a creative future. We can unite the commune, the insurrection, or the imaginary party to what we already know. We can use some of the theoretical-practical elements that Tiqqun provides for us. The most important matter is that people must react, and Tiqqun is constantly reminding us of it.★

While more people organized against

capitalism is better, the struggle against capitalism needs more coherence and confluence. This does not mean that we have to be under the same umbrella, but we must search for the connection between all the multiplicities that are involved in the re-appropriation of the civil war against Empire. Therefore, we have to find a way to make irreversible the revolution and elaborate the civil war, a way to be a becoming-in-history rather than a being-in-history.

- ★ The Radical Bank of Brighton and Hove (a social center squat in what was previously a Barclay's bank in Brighton, that lasted from 6/15 to 7/15 in 2015) is one example of that. This communal movement did more things—in less than a month—than most of the activist community in that city. The Radical Bank was an open space where everyone was welcomed, where people worked in an egalitarian way—each one in their speciality—with no distinctions, just action. Students, the homeless, white- and blue-collar workers, travellers, people of different nationalities... people who did not previously know each other. What the Radical Bank did in Brighton was the opening of a line of flight within one of the most powerful metropolises in the UK.



performance by the Radical Bank of Brighton and Hove

*There is no reconquest in the desert of
knowledge.*

Alejandro Arozamena¹⁰⁷

107 Arozamena, Alejandro. "Nuda Vida, Mercancía Desnuda y Verdadera Vida Ausente" (2015, October 2). *Nuda Vida* (Periódico Diagonal). Available on: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/blogs/aitor-jimenez-y-pedro-jose-mariblanca/nuda-vida-mercancia-desnuda-y-verdadera-vida-ausente-por>

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Negation is important to Tiqqun. However, negation only creates movement. Negation is opposition and opposition is not enough. The insurrection is interesting as a negation—it implies rupture—but the rupture needs something else, it needs to create its own temporality. This temporality can be that of the communes, but if the communes represent the outside that moves inside, how can these dialectical realities be interconnected? Tiqqun defends desertion, but deserting means fleeing. Thus there is no interrelation between the outside and the inside.

